

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A tube gripping ferrule for a metal tube fitting, the ferrule comprising:

~~an~~ a generally cylindrical interior wall through the center of the ferrule so that said ferrule can be installed over a metal tube end; said ferrule being case hardened over substantially its entire surface;

an outer wall that axially tapers with a radially increasing dimension from a front portion of the ferrule to a back portion of the ferrule;

said front portion of the ferrule indenting and biting into an outer surface of a metal tube end when the fitting is assembled and pulled-up;

said interior wall comprising first and second cylindrical portions, said first cylindrical portion being axially adjacent a front edge of the ferrule and having the smallest interior wall diameter of the ferrule, and said second cylindrical portion extending to a back edge of the ferrule; said second cylindrical portion having a larger diameter than said first cylindrical portion.

2. (Original) The ferrule of claim 1 wherein said back edge of the ferrule is radially spaced from the tube end when the ferrule is assembled into and pulled-up in the fitting.

3. (Currently Amended) The ferrule of claim 1 wherein the tube fitting is a two ferrule tube fitting and comprises first and second components that are joined together to install the tube

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fitting on a metal tube end and enclose two ferrules that are axially driven together when the tube fitting is made up, wherein said ferrule having said first and second cylindrical portions is a front ferrule in said two ferrule tube fitting.

4. (Currently Amended) The ferrule of claim 1 wherein the tube fitting is a two ferrule tube fitting and comprises first and second components that are joined together to install the tube fitting on a metal tube end and enclose two ferrules that are axially driven together when the tube fitting is made up, wherein said ferrule having said first and second cylindrical portions is a back ferrule in said two ferrule tube fitting.

5. (Original) The ferrule of claim 1 wherein the ferrule comprises metal.

6. (Currently Amended) The ferrule of claim 5 wherein the ferrule and said tube end comprise comprises stainless steel.

7. Canceled.

8. (Previously Presented) The ferrule of claim 1 wherein said front portion hinges inwardly and collects the tube end upon pull-up of the fitting.